UNITED
NATIONS

DP

Governing Council
of the
United Nations
Development Programme

Distr.
GENERAL

DP/FPA/CP/88
8 April 1991

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

Thirty-eighth session
3 - 21 June 1991, New York
Item 6 of the provisional agenda
UNFPA

UNITED NATIONAL POPULATION FUND

PROPOSED PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES

Recommendation by the Executive Director
Assistance to the Government of Malaysia
Support for the national population programme

Proposed UNFPA assistance:	$1.5 million
Government's contribution:	$4 million
Duration:	Four years
Estimated starting date:	January 1992
Executing agencies:	Government of Malaysia
Government co-operating agencies:	National Population and Family Development Board University of Malaya Ministry of Health Federation of Family Planning Associations, Malaysia Department of Statistics Department of Agriculture
Government co-ordinating agency:	Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department

/...

91-11378

MALAYSIA

Demographic facts

Population Total (000)	
Total	17,339
Males	8,737
Females	8,602
Sex ratio (/100 females)	101.6
Urban	7,336
Rural	10,003
Per cent urban	42.3
Population in year 2000 (000)	20,870
Functional age groups (%)	
Young child: 0-4	13.2
Child: 5-14	23.0
Youth: 15-24	20.1
Elderly: 60+	5.9
65+	3.8
Women: 15-49	25.8
Median age (years)	21.7
Dependency ratios: total	66.7
(/100) Aged 0-14	60.3
Aged 65+	6.4
Agricultural population density (/hectare of arable land)	5.1
Population density (/sq. km.)	53
Average annual change (000)	
Population increase	369
Births	464
Deaths	95
Net migration	0
Annual population total (% growth)	2.02
Urban	3.87
Rural	0.56
Crude birth rate (/1000)	25.4
Crude death rate (/1000)	5.2
Net migration rate (/1000)	0.0
Total fertility rate (/woman)	3.09
Gross reproduction rate (/woman)	1.50
Net reproduction rate (/woman)	1.44
Infant mortality rate (/1000)	20
Life expectancy at birth (years)	
Males	68.7
Females	73.0
Both sexes	70.8
GNP per capita (U.S. dollars, 1988)	1940

Sources: Population density on arable land is derived from two publications issued by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations: FAO Production Yearbook 1985 and World-wide Estimates and Projections of Agricultural and Non-Agricultural Population Segments 1950-2025, ESS/MIS/86/2; gross national production per capita: World Bank, World Development Report 1990. Figures for population, total population by sex, population by age group, age indicators, urban-rural population, and population density (/sq. km.) refer to the year 1990; figures for average annual change, rate of annual change, and fertility and mortality are the five-year averages for 1990-1995. These data are from the Population Division, Department of International Economic and Social Affairs of the United Nations, World population prospects: 1988.

I. SUMMARY

1. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) proposes to support selected areas of intervention in the amount of $1.5 million over a period of four years, beginning January 1992, to assist the Government of Malaysia in achieving its population and development objectives. The proposed selected project areas are based on the findings and recommendations of a Programme Review and Strategy Development (PRSD) mission that visited Malaysia in mid-1990 and on consultations with the Government of Malaysia.

2. The proposed areas of intervention would include support for population and development activities with emphasis on strengthening policy formulation; integrating population issues into development planning; conducting selected population research; carrying out activities linking environmental and population concerns; and supporting women, population and development activities.

3. All projects under the proposed programme, as in all UNFPA-assisted programmes, would be undertaken in accordance with the principles and objectives of the World Population Plan of Action; that is, that population policies should be consistent with internationally and nationally recognized human rights of individual freedom, justice and the survival of national, regional and minority groups (para. 14 (d)); that respect for human life is basic to all human societies (para 14 (e)); and that all couples and individuals have the basic right to decide freely and responsibly the number and spacing of their children and to have the information, education and means to do so (para. 14 (f)).

II. BACKGROUND

4. With a total population of just over 17 million and a per capita gross national product (GNP) of US$ 1,940 in 1988, Malaysia has been one of the economic success stories of the developing world. Its development scenario of the past 20 years has been dominated by the New Economic Policy (NEP), which has sought to restructure Malaysian society along ethnic lines and to eradicate poverty irrespective of race. The NEP has indirectly exerted a dominant influence on demographic trends in the country. According to United Nations estimates and projections at the medium variant as assessed in 1990, the average annual rate of growth in 1985 was 2.64 per cent and is projected to drop to 2.26 per cent in 1990. In 1985 the population was 15.7 million and the projected figure for 1990 is 17.9 million. Overall growth rates have been significantly higher in Sabah (3.5 per cent a year between 1986 and 1988) than for Peninsular Malaysia (2.4 per cent) or Sarawak (2.6 per cent). For the country as a whole, at an average annual rate of growth rate of 2.26 per cent for the period 1990-1995, the total population is expected to reach 22 million by the year 2000, with about 81 per cent living in the Peninsula and the remainder divided roughly equally between Sabah and Sarawak. Contraceptive prevalence rates increased from 36 per cent to 49 per cent between 1974 and 1988, but use of ineffective methods is still high especially among the Malay segment of the population.

5. The population continues to be young, which has great implications for development planning. However, the proportion of the population below age 15 is expected to decrease from 38.3 per cent in 1985 to about 37.5 per cent in 1990 and 34.8 per cent in 2000. For the immediate future, the dependency burden can be expected to be less heavy relative to earlier periods, and there should be less of a problem of creating employment for the burgeoning numbers entering the labour force. The total dependency rate dropped from 76 per cent in 1980 to 70 per cent in 1988. With the working population growing at a faster rate than the population as a whole, accounting for 59 per cent of the total in 1988, the problems of human resource development and pressures on the labour market are clearly important. The number of elderly

is projected to more than double between 1980 and 2000, and this will require provisions for their support and care as families are less able to care for them.

6. Improvements in child health are evident from the decline in the infant mortality rate from 82.2 to 24.1 per 1,000 live births over the 30 years between 1955 and 1985. A major concern now is to improve the links between maternal and child health and family planning since the burden of poverty and poor health of mothers and children frequently correlate with high fertility and ineffective child spacing. Another priority is to reduce the differential among regions and sub-groups of the population. Although knowledge of at least one method of family planning is almost universal, the contraceptive prevalence rate for married women of reproductive age was only 49 per cent in 1988. Use of effective methods (most commonly the pill, followed by condoms and intra-uterine devices (IUDs)) was much lower at 33 per cent. The family planning programme administered by the Ministry of Health is mainly provided through the rural health services. By 1989 these services had achieved about 93 per cent coverage in Peninsular Malaysia and about 60 per cent in Sabah and Sarawak.

7. Internal migration and urbanization have exerted serious pressures on the environment and available infrastructure. On the one hand, the vulnerable groups of recent migrants, female-headed households and slum dwellers require special attention to cope with the increasing pressures of life in urban areas. On the other hand, areas affected by large-scale out-migration face serious productivity problems and a large dependent population, especially elderly women, who need support and care. It is international migration, however, that has increasingly captured the attention of Malaysian policy makers. The main problem has been the pressure on basic amenities in areas settled by non-documented migrants, especially in East Malaysia.

8. Malaysia's successful Five-Year Development Plan (1986-1990) shows increasing recognition of the role of demographic factors. According to its provisions, the National Population Policy is to be viewed in relation to the natural resources of the country and as a parameter for development programmes. To improve the "quality of life of the population", attempts have been made for more comprehensive and consistent integration of demographic factors into planning across all sectors of the economy. The overall goals of the Sixth National Development Plan (1991-1995) are eradication of poverty; promotion of self reliance; development of human resources; improvement of education, health, quality of life and protection of the environment; and promotion of sexual equality and an enhanced role for women.

III. REVIEW OF UNFPA AND OTHER ASSISTANCE TO DATE

9. UNFPA assistance to Malaysia began in 1973 with an allocation of $4.8 million to the national family planning programme for the period 1973-1978. Following a UNFPA Needs Assessment Mission in 1978, while the second programme of assistance was being formulated, UNFPA approved five interim projects. The second country programme in the amount of $6.5 million for four years was approved in 1980. This assistance was designed to complement and supplement a second population and family development project jointly funded by the Government and a World Bank loan. UNFPA's third programme of assistance to the Government in the amount of $2.1 million was approved in 1987 for a five-year period. Between 1973 and 1989, UNFPA allocated $14 million for population activities in Malaysia. Of this amount, $8 million (56 per cent) was allocated to support maternal and child health and family planning (MCH/FP) activities, followed by population information, education and communication (IEC) activities and for formulation and evaluation of population policies and programmes, each of which received approximately 10 per cent of allocations.

Maternal and child health and family planning

10. UNFPA assistance has been used to support the implementation of the national MCH/FP programme through the National Population and Family Development Board (NPFDB), the Federation of Family Planning Associations, Malaysia (FFPAM), and the Ministry of Health. Three important workshops were conducted by the NPFDB for the formulation of strategies for self-reliance in reproductive research. The family planning clinic services and family centres of FFPAM have been able to: (a) recruit and serve more acceptors and to improve the quality and comprehensiveness of services offered; (b) intensify community-based distribution of contraceptives; (c) provide staff training; (d) improve clinic facilities; and (e) develop and demonstrate effective approaches for the implementation of family planning and family life education activities. Various family health/family planning training programmes were also conducted by the Ministry of Health to improve human resource development, especially for traditional birth attendants (TBAs), community leaders and health and family planning workers.

Information, communication and education

11. With the aid of UNFPA resources, the NPFDB developed: (a) a national population support communication system in collaboration with other ministries and agencies interested in the population and family planning sectors; (b) an appropriate network to ensure an organized flow of population information; and (c) a training programme for its IEC staff.

Basic data collection and analysis

12. UNFPA projects have sought to improve census coverage and processing, especially of vital statistics in East Malaysia. Studies undertaken by the Department of Statistics have identified some of the factors responsible for the deficiency in vital statistics in East Malaysia. Efforts will be made to develop alternate means of collecting better information: for example, NPFDB has utilized UNFPA assistance to conduct a population and family survey in Sabah and Sarawak. The preliminary findings from this survey have been used in the formulation of the recent National Development Plan.

Population dynamics

13. UNFPA assistance has been used to strengthen the Population Studies Unit at the University of Malaya. This has facilitated the provision of undergraduate and graduate training in population-related issues.

Special programmes

14. In order to assist the Secretariat for Women's Affairs which was set up in 1983, UNFPA provided funds for establishing a clearing-house for information and materials on women in view of the increasing role of women in Malaysia's socio-economic development. UNFPA has also funded the University of Malaya and Malaysia's Women's Advancement Institute (IKWAM) to undertake a study on strengthening women's participation in development of family welfare programmes. The study is aimed at analysing the specific needs and problems of various disadvantaged groups of women and providing a comprehensive information base needed for integrating such women into the nation's development.

Other external assistance

15. The World Bank has provided assistance for population programmes through two loans. The first one was provided under the First Population Project (1973-1978) in which UNFPA participated. The second loan was provided under the framework of the Population and Family Health Project (1979-1982).

IV. PROPOSED PROGRAMME 1992-1995

16. Malaysia has made commendable economic and social progress in many areas and has become increasingly self-reliant in the population field, partly due to the contribution of UNFPA. Given the current population policy of Malaysia, UNFPA is of the opinion that there is no longer a need to support a comprehensive population programme for Malaysia. The main strategy of the proposed selected project areas of intervention would be to strengthen the country's capacity to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate population programmes.

Basic data collection and analysis

17. The findings of the PRSD mission undertaken in mid-1990 showed that as regards basic data collection, the most serious problem is the undercoverage of vital events in East Malaysia. It called for efforts to identify a feasible survey approach for obtaining usable data on births and deaths in the short term while improving the existing civil registration system. As for Peninsular Malaysia, although there is a rich array of population and human resource-related data, this needs to be translated into synthesized, easily understood and applicable policy and programmes.

18. In order to obtain and derive reliable and comparable data useful for policy-making purposes, UNFPA proposes that the Department of Statistics (DOS) conduct diagnostic studies to assess the completeness and coverage of the civil registration system in Sabah and Sarawak. On the basis of such studies, the Federal Government's efforts to strengthen the civil registration system would be assisted by providing training and help in the development of materials. Technical support would also be provided to DOS. The total amount requested is $100,000 for the period 1992-1994.

19. UNFPA proposes that the Social Obstetrics and Gynaecology section of the University Hospital (University of Malaya) undertake research on materials development in conjunction with the contraceptive demand creation programme. The results would provide a basis for the Government to improve the availability and accessibility of contraceptive and related health products through contraceptive demand creation mechanisms, utilizing commercial retail channels. Total UNFPA assistance would amount to $160,000 for 1992-1994.

20. Assistance is requested for research on innovative studies in increasing awareness and demand creation for family planning services and on community-based projects. Total assistance would amount to $375,000 for 1992-1995. The sum of these three projects would amount to $635,000.

Population policy formulation

21. Considerable progress has been made in integrating population factors into development planning. However, institutional resources for effective population-development planning across all sectors and especially for Sabah and Sarawak are still weak. While development planning is primarily the responsibility

of the Economic Planning Unit of the Prime Minister's Department, the NPFDB is also giving greater emphasis to research and evaluation mechanisms for monitoring population dynamics and for assessing the demographic implications of socio-economic development. However, the sectoral implications of the new population policy have yet to be clearly understood. In light of emerging environmental concerns, it is also important to promote a more systematic approach to population and environmental issues in development planning.

22. UNFPA proposes to provide technical assistance to upgrade institutional resources available for formulating and analyzing population policy alternatives and for integrating population into economic and social development planning. The main objective is to enable the NPFDB to perform its advisory role to the Government as well as to strengthen its supervisory and co-ordinating function in population-related issues. Funds requested are for short-term consultancies and training for professional staff in the amount of $250,000 for 1992-1995.

23. In order to create greater awareness of the linkages between environment and population, UNFPA proposes to conduct studies on the implications of current demographic trends and population policies on the Malaysian environment in order to arrive at a better integration of population with environmental planning at the federal, state and district levels. An amount of $100,000 has been requested for research activities, training and seminars for the period 1992-1995. The total amount for the two projects in population policy formulation would be $350,000.

Women, population and development

24. According to the PRSD mission, emphasis should be given to improving the role of women both as participants and beneficiaries in development efforts. In addition, the government structure should be strengthened nation-wide to ensure effective and efficient implementation of the National Policy for Women that was adopted at the end of 1989.

25. To ensure the effective implementation of the National Policy for Women, staff and liaison officers of the Secretariat for Women's Affairs (HAWA) and the national institutions require training in gender planning. UNFPA proposes to help identify suitable experts and to design such training courses. The consultants would be expected to identify and correct any institutional weakness in the national machinery, introduce integrative strategies for addressing women's needs in development planning, and set up systems for monitoring and evaluating development projects. A total amount of $205,000 is being requested for the period 1992-1995.

26. UNFPA proposes that the University of Malaya develop a practical and comprehensive survey instrument for measuring the economic activity and labour-force participation of women in Malaysia. This would strengthen the capability of a core group of researchers in implementing the developed survey instrument on a national scale. An amount of $80,000 has been requested for the two years 1992-1993.

27. UNFPA proposes that the Department of Agriculture develop and conduct training programmes to address a range of women's needs. These would include educational and motivational programmes for family welfare and family planning, decision-making and for encouraging women's participation in community development, as well as IEC efforts in gender sensitization. A total amount of $80,000 has been requested for these projects for the three-year period 1992-1994. The three projects in the area of women, population and development would total $365,000.

Programme reserve

28. An amount of $150,000 is being requested to meet any unforeseen needs that may arise during the execution of the proposed project.

Programme co-ordination

29. The Economic Planning Unit is the official co-ordinating agency for the Government of Malaysia and is responsible for co-ordinating all activities between implementing agencies (including non-governmental organizations) and UNFPA. As with all of its programmes, UNFPA would seek to co-ordinate its activities with those of its partner agencies in the United Nations system and in particular with those in the Joint Consultative Group on Policy (JCGP).

Monitoring, evaluation and management

30. UNFPA-supported activities in Malaysia are currently managed by the office of the UNFPA Representative in Kuala Lumpur. The programme would be subject to monitoring and evaluation in accordance with revised UNFPA guidelines, which emphasize the need for progress reports, tripartite reviews, periodic country reviews and a final report on individual projects.

Financial summary

31. As indicated in paragraph 1, UNFPA proposes to support selected project areas of intervention in the amount of $1.5 million over four years in Malaysia. UNFPA assistance to the Government of Malaysia for the four-year period 1992-1995 by work plan category is as follows:

	UNFPA regular resources $
Basic data collection and analysis	635,000
Population policy formulation	350,000
Women, population and development	365,000
Programme reserve	150,000
TOTAL	1,500,000

V. RECOMMENDATION

32. The Executive Director recommends that the Governing Council:

(a) Approve the assistance for Malaysia in the amount of $1.5 million for the four-year period 1992-1995;

(b) Authorize the Executive Director to allocate the funds and make appropriate arrangements with the Government of Malaysia.